

# DESEGREGATING NYC

## A (VERY MODEST) ONE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

### A REPORT BY

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Fifty-one years ago, in the wake of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the United States passed the Fair Housing Act, promising to combat segregation. But five decades later, New York City remains sharply segregated: in our neighborhoods, our schools, our institutions.

One year ago, on the 50th anniversary, we issued **Desegregating NYC: 12 Steps Toward a More Inclusive City**, identifying concrete steps our city could take toward integration, to build a more inclusive, multiracial democracy. This is a (very modest) one-year progress report.

After 50 years of mostly ignoring the cancerous segregation of our neighborhoods and our schools, New York City has taken some first steps to start to reckon with it. The *Where We Live NYC* planning process on fair- housing, the School Diversity Advisory Group's *Making the Grade* report, and the District 15 middle-school integration plan may be halting steps.

They do not yet have the level of leadership from City Hall that would be necessary for serious and broader implementation. Still, they represent more attention to integration in our city's public policy than we have paid over the past five decades. If they allow us the illusion of progress, they are worthless. But if they give us courage to do much more, they could be a good start.

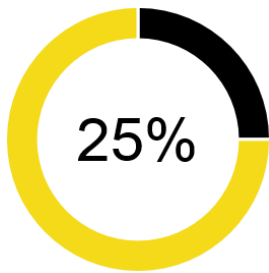
In recent weeks, our attention has rightly been called to the appalling fact that just seven black students were admitted to Stuyvesant High School this year (out of 895 slots), and that black and Latinx students who make up 67% of NYC high-school students were offered fewer than 11% of the slots at the eight specialized high schools. These statistics put the lie to the idea that we take equality seriously.

We should not let the focus on the specialized high schools mask broader segregation that is pervasive across our city. Instead, we should use it as a hard push to more honestly confront the extreme levels of segregation that perpetuate racialized inequality -- since residential mobility and high-quality public schools are primary avenues of social mobility -- and then commit to take much bolder action.

Public policies in housing, education, and infrastructure helped to create a segregated New York City. If we are serious about equality, opportunity, and democracy, they must help to desegregate it.

# PROGRESS REPORT: DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

**Step 1:** Make “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” (AFFH) the law and ongoing practice of New York City.



**Fair housing planning process is underway. Recommendations due this summer.**

Despite the Trump Administration’s **cynical roll-back of the Obama Administration’s rule requiring cities and states to develop plans for “affirmatively furthering fair housing,”** New York City chose to move forward with the launch of Where We Live NYC in March 2018, a comprehensive fair housing planning process for the city.

**Where We Live NYC** is led by the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), in partnership with the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) and a wide range of other city agencies and community organizations. The City describes Where We Live NYC as “a collaborative planning process led by the City of New York to better understand how challenges like segregation and discrimination impact New Yorkers’ everyday lives. Through Where We Live NYC, the City of New York is developing the next chapter of fair housing policies that fight discrimination, break down barriers to opportunity, and build more just and inclusive neighborhoods.”

To engage New Yorkers, Where We Live NYC has hosted over 60 focus group conversations, reaching more than 700 residents. They recently released an interactive online toolkit, where residents can view **preliminary data**, **provide input**, and find tools to **host their own** community meeting. Where We Live NYC is expected to release its draft report this summer, integrate public feedback, and finalize the report by the end of the year. The findings are intended to shape the City’s housing policy moving forward.

The City Council also affirmed the importance of AFFH. In June, the Council passed two bills (Intro 601-A, sponsored by City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, and Intro 607-A, sponsored by Council Member Donovan Richards) that require the City to create and report on an affordable housing plan (with attention to the depth of affordability needed, created, and preserved in each neighborhood), and to specifically include goals for affirmatively furthering fair housing, which can include prevention of displacement and other strategies to combat segregation and inequality, as well as creation and preservation of affordable housing units.



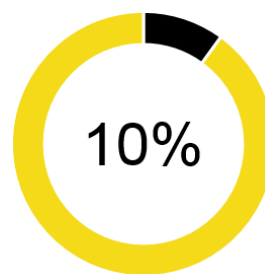
## DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Both the Administration's Where We Live NYC and the Council's new laws are valuable processes for facing the reality of segregation. Especially as the Trump Administration is rolling back HUD expectations and allowing segregation to continue unabated, they are commendable steps. It remains to be seen whether the AFFH planning process will produce real change, in the City's housing policy, and across multiple agencies. A draft of the City's report and recommendations will be produced this summer.

Meanwhile, there is not yet evidence of a meaningful commitment to the effort by Mayor de Blasio himself, or by a deputy mayor or senior leader at City Hall. The Mayor did not attend the launch of the Where We Live NYC process, or give a quote for the press release. He has not attended any of the dozens of community conversations. He did not sign the Council's legislation on AFFH, Intro 601-A or Intro 607-A, letting them become law by attrition.

While HPD and NYCHA can propose new policy, there is reason for concern about whether genuine change can be achieved without senior leadership from City Hall, or a formal process with institutional capacity to meaningfully link efforts across agencies. To date, there is no evidence of that City Hall leadership.

**Step 2:** Commit to inclusionary housing through neighborhood rezonings in “high opportunity neighborhoods,” not just in low-income communities of color.



**Just 1 of 10 MIH neighborhood rezonings is in a whiter, wealthier neighborhood.**

Of the five neighborhoods that have been rezoned during the de Blasio Administration with area-wide rezonings including mandatory inclusionary housing (MIH), all five are low-income communities of color (East New York, East Harlem, Far Rockaway, Inwood, and Jerome Avenue).

Of the **neighborhoods being considered**, most are also communities of color: Bay Street in Staten Island, Chinatown, Southern Boulevard in the Bronx, and Bushwick. In Bushwick, Councilmembers Antonio Reynoso and Rafael Espinal have led a four year community engagement process that explicitly pushes back on predatory development, thoughtfully updating neighborhood zoning in a way that protects long-time residents from displacement and celebrates the culture and character of the area.



## DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Just two of the neighborhoods being considered are in whiter, higher income neighborhoods: Gowanus and Long Island City. At present, any changes for Long Island City appear uncertain in the aftermath of Amazon's decision to withdraw its proposal for the neighborhood.

As a result, the only neighborhood where an area-wide, inclusionary rezoning is being actively considered for a "high opportunity neighborhood" is Gowanus. The Department of City Planning released **Gowanus: A Framework for a Sustainable, Inclusive, Mixed-use Neighborhood** in June 2018, a **Draft Rezoning Proposal** in January 2019, and the **Draft Scope of Work** for the Environmental Impact Statement in March 2019.

According to City Planning's estimates, the rezoning will allow for 8,200 new housing units, 3,000 of which would be permanently affordable to low- and moderate-income families (FAQ with affordability and other details available [here](#)), making Gowanus the city's largest MIH rezoning.

With 37% of new units affordable, in-between the neighborhoods of Park Slope and Carroll Gardens, where there is very little affordable housing, the rezoning would significantly increase diversity and reduce segregation in the area. (Residents of public housing, and the Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice, argue that the Gowanus rezoning does not yet include an adequate plan to support current low-income neighborhood residents by making needed investments in public housing developments adjacent to the rezoning area.)

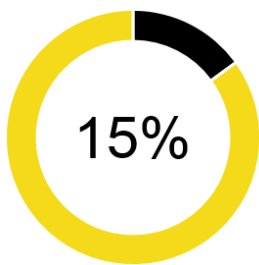
Fair housing advocates have **called upon** the de Blasio Administration to consider other high-opportunity neighborhoods, such as Chelsea and Clinton in Manhattan; Bay Ridge, Midwood, Sheepshead Bay and Manhattan Beach in Brooklyn; and Long Island City, Bayside and Forest Hills in Queens.

City Planning Chair Marisa Lago has indicated, however, that she will not move forward with rezoning proposals for such neighborhoods without the support of the local City Council Member. "Absent community interest, it would be an exercise in futility," she said.



## DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

**Step 3:** Fight housing discrimination in co-ops (and rentals, too.)



**No action on co-ops.  
Testing for rental  
housing  
discrimination has  
increased.**

Two bills addressing discrimination in housing cooperatives (**Intro 0761**, sponsored by Council Member Lander, and **Intro 0822**, sponsored by Public Advocate Jumaane Williams) have been introduced during the 2018 session, but have languished and not yet been heard in committee.

Intro 0761, modeled on a comparable law in Suffolk County, would increase transparency by requiring co-op boards to give applicants a reason for their denial within five days of making the decision. Civil rights and fair housing advocates argue this would help reduce discrimination, by preventing boards from denying people without cause. Where applicants believe they have been discriminated against, and the reason given under the law is a false pretense, they would gain the ability to challenge the veracity of the reason given.

Intro 0822 would create a uniform and regulated application process so that requirements are standardized and clear and applicants are communicated with in a reasonable time frame. This law would set guidelines for co-op boards to maintain a standard application, communicate receipt of applications within 10 days, and communicate determinations on eligibility with 45 days.

The primary lobbying group for co-op boards has expressed strong opposition to these bills.

For discrimination in rental housing, the NYC Commission on Human Rights has been increasing its testing program and Commission-initiated investigations. At a City Council hearing in February 2019, the Commission reported that it had performed 290 tests for discrimination in rental housing, with 222 investigating discrimination based on source-of-income (e.g. Section 8 vouchers), and 22 focused on race.



## DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

**Step 4:** Strengthen rent regulations as a strategy for integration without displacement.



**Rent laws up for renewal in June. Opportunity for much stronger tenant protections.**

One highly meaningful way to promote integration is to enable low- and moderate-income tenants of color to remain in their communities when rents increase due to gentrification. New York State has an opportunity to significantly strengthen **rent regulation** when its current laws expire this June.

In May of 2018, the State Assembly passed a **package of legislation** that would protect tenants from sudden dramatic rent increases, thus preventing the displacement of low-income tenants from many gentrifying neighborhoods. At that time, it seemed impossible that any of these bills would pass in the Republican-majority State Senate, which was notoriously beholden to real estate interests.

With a new Democratic majority in the New York State Senate, it is possible that the State Legislature will go even further than last year's Assembly package. Both the Senate and the Assembly are now considering legislation that, if passed, would close loopholes in tenant protections and expand rent stabilization statewide.

The bills targeted at protecting existing tenants would prevent landlords from hiking up preferential rent during a tenancy (S2845A/A4349), regulate rent increases related to major capital improvements (S3693/A6322) and individual apartment improvements (S3770/A6465), cap rent increases for rent controlled apartments (S299/A167), eliminate the vacancy bonus (S185/A2351), allow tenants to more effectively challenge rent increases (A04003/ A09186/ S08770) and prohibit the harassment of rent-regulated tenants (A07992A/S04673-A).

Additional bills would expand rent stabilization throughout the state. These include ending vacancy decontrol (S2591/A1198) and a "good cause" eviction measure, which some are calling "universal rent control". This bill extends New York City's 1974 Emergency Tenant Protection Act statewide, requiring landlords to give a reason for eviction. It expands coverage to buildings with 4+, as opposed to 6+ units, and gives tenants the right to stay in place if they refuse to pay an "unconscionable" rent increase, defined as more than 1.5 times the CPI increase from the previous year.



## DESEGREGATING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

In his State of the State speech this January, Governor Cuomo expressed full or partial support for many of these reforms, though he was silent on eliminating the vacancy bonus (the “good cause” eviction bill had not yet been introduced).

Governor Cuomo has launched a **new website** to help inform tenants about rent regulation. State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie have indicated support for much of this legislation as well.

Still, there is strong pressure from the real estate industry opposing this legislation, seeking to maintain many of the loopholes within New York’s rent regulation laws, and preventing their expansion. Whether or not many of New York City’s gentrifying communities will be durably integrated, or whether they will transition rapidly from mixed-income communities-of-color into whiter, wealthier neighborhoods hangs in the balance.



# PROGRESS REPORT: DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

In February 1964, a decade after the Supreme Court ruled against school segregation in *Brown v. Board*, more than **400,000 students took part in a one-day school boycott**, demanding that the NYC Board of Education move rapidly to integrate the city's schools. It was one of the largest civil rights protests in U.S. history. Segregated schools had been illegal in New York City since 1920; but, then as now, patterns of residential segregation and school assignment ensured a racially segregated school system, and an unequal one. After strong pushback from white parents, however, the push for integration was dropped.

For most of the past 50 years, there has been no action -- and virtually no conversation -- about segregation in New York City's schools.

Over the past five years, as a result of parent, educator and student activism (including the efforts of many groups involved in the **NYC Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation**, and the student-led **Integrate NYC**, as well as others), that has begun to change.

The City Council passed the **School Diversity Accountability Act** in 2015, requiring an annual report from the DOE on steps to address segregation.

In 2017, the DOE began to set goals (albeit modest ones) for more diverse schools, and established the **School Diversity Advisory Group**, a strong and diverse group of educators, parents, students and activists charged by the DOE with working to reshape citywide policies and practices such as admissions and program planning.

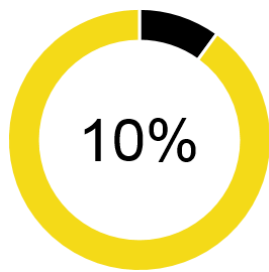
In February 2019, the School Diversity Advisory Group (SDAG) released its first report and recommendations, **Making the Grade: The Path to Real Integration and Equity for NYC Public School Students**. The SDAG report makes a strong case for school integration, and sets out an ambitious but concrete roadmap that mirrors many of the recommendations in our *Desegregating NYC* report, but goes into much greater detail on implementation.

The extensive recommendations of the SDAG's *Making the Grade* report are at risk of being lost in the controversy around the city's specialized high schools. With stronger attention, however, they can provide a guide for conversation, debate, and action. NYC Council Education Chair Mark Treyger has indicated his intention to hold a hearing on school segregation this spring.



# DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

## Step 5: Reform high-school admissions policies.



**Much conversation  
(but little action)  
about the 8  
specialized high  
schools. Little  
conversation about  
the other 400.**

New York City has 700 high-school program options, in more than 400 public high schools. Students can apply to schools all across the city, so the residential segregation that shapes elementary and middle schools need not be a factor. Nonetheless, many of the city's high schools remain highly segregated.

In recent weeks, the City has been talking about -- if not yet taking any meaningful action around -- the dramatic lack of black and Latinx students at the city's 8 specialized high-schools, which rely solely on a single entrance exam, the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT). This year, only **7 of 895 students** admitted to the most competitive specialized high school - Stuyvesant - were black. Black and Hispanic students make up 70 percent of the city's public school population, but just 10 percent of specialized high school admissions.

In June 2018, Mayor de Blasio released a proposal for diversifying the specialized high schools. The plan, which has sparked sharp controversy, would phase out the high school admissions test (SHSAT) and fill all seats at specialized high schools with top performing students from all middle schools across the city. A recent **report** suggests that, if fully implemented, the Mayor's plan would result in five times the number of black students and more than four times the number of Latinx students being admitted. The number of white students would remain steady. The number of Asian students would be cut in half; public outcry against the plan has been strong among Asian communities in New York City, who argue that they were not meaningfully consulted or included in the development of the Mayor's plan.

Changes to admissions process for the specialized high schools would require a change in New York State Law, since the State Legislature passed the Hecht-Calandra Act in 1971, as part of the backlash against school integration efforts. State legislators have previously shown little inclination for comprehensive reform. However, State Senator John Liu, who chairs the New York State Senate Committee on NYC Education has announced that the committee will hold hearings on the topic this spring.



## DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

For the over 400 other public high schools in New York City, no change in State Law would be needed, but only modest progress has taken place about how to further integrate the city's high schools.

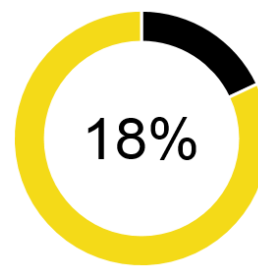
As of fall 2018, the DOE eliminated “**limited unscreened**” high schools, which gave priority to applicants who attended admissions fairs to express their interest. This policy had the effect of biasing admissions towards applicants with the time and money to visit the school, largely from white and upper middle class families. The 245 high schools that previously used limited unscreened admissions shifted to “Educational Option” programs, which enroll students along a bell curve of academic success in order to increase diversity.

As outlined in the SDAG report, while the city's “screened” high schools better reflect the diversity of NYC's public school students than the specialized high schools, white and Asian students are still significantly over-represented.

As we argued last year, the DOE could make meaningful progress toward high-school integration by adjusting or eliminating screens, insisting that all screened high-schools take part in the

“Diversity in Admissions” program, or through a “controlled choice” model that factor school diversity into the algorithm that assigns students.

**Step 6:** Adopt district-wide “controlled choice” approaches for middle schools in diverse but segregated community-school districts.



**District 15 adopted a bold plan. 2 districts (out of 32) have taken action. 9 more districts identified by SDAG.**

The plan to integrate the middle schools of District 15 is the most ambitious desegregation effort that New York City has embarked upon in many years. District 15 (which includes Park Slope, Red Hook, Sunset Park, Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens, Gowanus, Windsor Terrace, and Kensington) is home to many excellent public middle schools, but in recent years they have become **starkly segregated** as a results of a screened admissions process, with white students over-represented at the most desired top three middle schools, and low income students underrepresented at these same schools.



## DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

After years of organizing by parents and local elected officials, the DOE helped establish the District 15 Diversity Plan Working Group, comprised of a diverse set of educators, parents, and students, and hired WXY Studios to support the process. They embarked on a nine-month participatory process. They organized four public workshops, more than 80 conversations, and surveyed 900 people to develop their policy proposals.

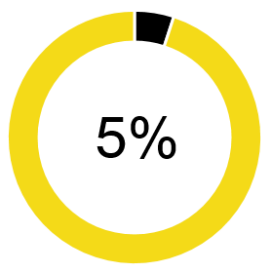
Following an extensive community planning process, the DOE adopted the **District 15 Diversity Plan** in September 2018. Starting this year, District 15 will use an open admissions method, eliminating screening altogether. Students from low-income families, students in temporary housing, and English Language Learners will receive priority for 52% of seats at each school. The plan also calls for significant investment in every school to equip them to support the diverse set of students they will serve in Fall 2019.

The DOE also adopted a plan for Community School District 3 (Harlem and the Upper West Side) last summer that took effect in Fall 2018. Under this plan, less ambitious than District 15 but still sparking some controversy, one quarter of school seats at each middle school will be reserved for students with lower scores on state tests, who are predominantly from the low-income portions of the district. This new system is likely to have a bigger impact on competitive schools than schools already serving higher-need students.

Processes like these must take place in many more districts. When the Mayor and Chancellor officially approved of the District 15 plan in the Fall of 2018, they launched a \$2 million school diversity grant to support community planning processes similar to the one in District 15. Mirroring our recommendation from last year's Desegregating NYC report, the SDAG recommends requiring segregated school districts with sufficient demographic diversity to create diversity and integration plans. They have identified nine districts: 1, 2, 3, 13, 15, 22, 27, 28, 31 (our recommendation also included districts 14, 20, 21, 24, 25, and 30).

# DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

**Step 7:** Pilot new approaches to integrate elementary schools and pre-K programs.



**Ambitious D1 Plan  
achieving  
meaningful success.  
Little other action.**

The vast majority of New York City's elementary schools are zoned neighborhood schools. As a result, they tend to mirror the residentially segregated neighborhoods in which they are located. However, it is important to remember that it is City policy -- not the real-estate market -- that assigns students to schools. In addition, recent data shows that approximately **40% of kindergartners do not attend their zoned school.**

If we are serious about school integration, there are a wide range of potential policies we could adopt: controlled choice, creating more unzoned elementary schools, school-pairing, and developing boundaries with integration in mind.

Manhattan's **District 1 Diversity Plan**, a form of "controlled choice," took effect in D1 elementary schools in the Fall of 2018. This pilot program gives priority for 67% of seats at all elementary schools (including Pre-K programs) to students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (FRL), students in temporary housing (STH), and Multilingual Learners (MLL). One year after the pilot was initiated, seven of the 16 elementary schools in District 1 offered 57 to 77 percent of kindergarten seats to qualifying students - the program's target range. This is nearly double the four elementary schools in District 1 whose kindergarten enrollment was within the target range in the 2017-18 school year. Additional schools came closer to the range from the previous year, making more offers to students identified as FRL, MLL, and/or STH. The District 1 Diversity Plan also launched a new family resource center in the District, where families can learn about school enrollment.

The DOE's 2017 **diversity plan** committed to ensuring diversity is a factor in rezonings and to fostering diverse classrooms when opening new schools and programs, but it has yet to follow through on this commitment.



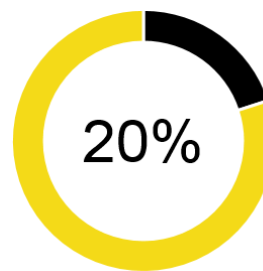


## DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

The SDAG's 2019 report calls for an integration strategy that starts with highly localized racial integration targets. They criticize the DOE's definition of a racially segregated school (90% or more students of one race) as simplistic and unambitious. Rather, district goals should be set based on community demographics in the short term, with a medium term goal of achieving racial integration at each school that reflects demographics at a borough level. These goals should take all races into account, as well as socioeconomic, language, and other factors based on individual community needs.

Integrating our elementary schools may require the most courage. But it is arguably the most important.

**Step 8:** Insure equity and inclusion, through the “5Rs of real integration”



**New anti-bias training underway, championed by Chancellor. Mixed results on discipline.**

As the student leaders of Integrate NYC consistently make clear, real integration is not only about changing who sits in which seats. They have developed the “**5Rs of real integration**” (including culturally responsive education, equitable access to resources, restorative justice, and a representative teaching staff, in addition to enrollment).

Both the School Diversity Advisory Group's recommendations and the D15 Working Group's **recommendations** reflect the 5Rs as necessary for building truly inclusive school communities.

The Mayor and the DOE have adopted elements of this platform. The Mayor's 2019 budget includes \$23 million for anti bias training and culturally responsive education for public school teachers.



## DESEGREGATING OUR SCHOOLS

Chancellor Carranza, who has a **track record** of instituting culturally relevant programs in the school districts he oversaw in Houston and San Francisco, announced in August that the trainings would be mandatory, and rolled out over two, rather than four years.

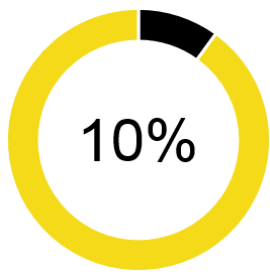
Mayor de Blasio has called for reduced criminalization of students and championed programs to reduce suspensions. Summonses by the School Safety Division dropped from 1,275 in 2012 to 18 in 2017. However, suspensions increased modestly in the 2017-2018 school year, and **analysis shows** the persistence of dramatic racial disparities.

The “Dignity in Schools” campaign is calling for a shift of resources away from law enforcement and toward more school counselors. The NYC Comptroller’s **June 2018 report** calls for increased investment in restorative justice throughout New York City schools.

The Council’s Education Committee, under the leadership of Chair Mark Treyger, has been focused on inequities in PTA funding, school counselors, and Fair Student Funding in general. Councilmember Antonio Reynoso’s **bill** requiring the DOE to report on funding for athletic teams and facilities, as well as student/ team demographic information, was heard in December 2018, but has not been voted on.

# PROGRESS REPORT: DESEGREGATING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

**Step 9:** Fix NYC's broken "fair-share" system to insure that every community gets and does their fair share.



**New limits on waste transfer stations in overburdened communities. Little evident commitment from 2019 Charter Revision Commission to fair-share reform.**

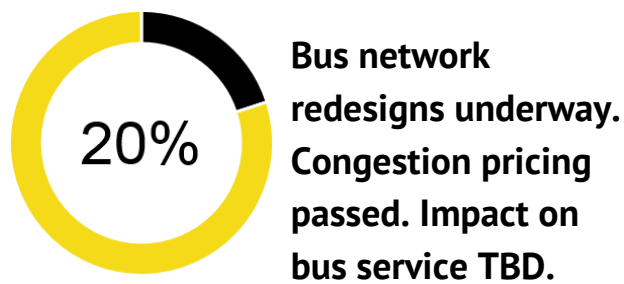
In 2017, the City Council released “**Doing Our Fair Share, Getting Our Fair Share,**” which showed that New York City’s “fair share” system for siting municipal services and infrastructure was badly broken, doing little to prevent unfair sitings. The Council proposed a comprehensive package of legislation that would make the siting process more transparent, hold city agencies accountable for promoting fairness in the siting process of all city facilities, update fair share criteria, and limit the siting of facilities in overburdened community districts. These reforms have been reintroduced in the 2018 session (Intro #0156, Intro #0543, Intro #0345, Intro #0251, Intro #0280, and Intro #0544) but they have not been heard in committee.

The 2019 Charter Revision Commission could provide an opportunity for some of these reforms to be implemented as amendments to the City Charter. Councilmembers Brad Lander and Antonio Reynoso, along with a coalition of housing and community advocates, have pushed for the Charter Commission to consider reforms to fair share, along with attention to comprehensive planning to establish a more proactive approach to siting, and pay more attention to a just distribution of benefits and burdens throughout the city. It is not clear whether the Commission will develop a ballot proposal in this area.

In mid-July 2018, fair share reform had one **victory**, with the passage of Intro 0157, introduced by Councilmember Antonio Reynoso. Passed in a contentious vote of 32-13, this law will reduce permitted capacity at waste transfer stations in particularly overburdened community districts. It is a racial equity law that aims to eliminate the unjust environmental degradation in low-income communities of color, where a majority of waste is processed.

## DESEGREGATING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

**Step 10:** Turn around NYC's bus system to connect more New Yorkers to opportunity.



While the subway crisis gets more attention, the ridership of New York City's buses is more predominantly people-of-color. Dramatically improving bus service, which has been growing worse for years, is an important part of connecting low-income New Yorkers to a wide range of opportunities.

Soon after his appointment as President of New York City Transit, Andy Byford announced a **Bus Action Plan** to improve local bus service throughout the five boroughs, which adopted all of the main tenets of the Bus Turnaround Campaign. The plan calls for route redesign to increase efficiency and respond to real travel patterns; bus fleet investments; all-door boarding; improved dispatching; better customer communication; and more coordination with the City DOT. In keeping with its customer communications goals, the MTA posts progress reports online.

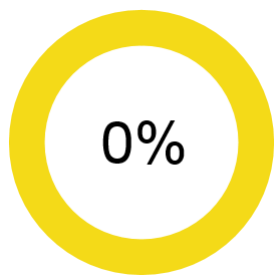
These commitments could lead to significant improvements in speed, reliability, and frequency, easing commutes for riders across the city. However, success will depend on coordination and commitment from the DOT (to maintain and expand bus lanes, coordinate traffic signals, maintain sidewalks and amenities), as well as an influx of funding to the MTA. The Mayor's **commitment to increase bus speeds** by adding and enforcing bus only lanes points in a hopeful direction. With the passage of Congestion Pricing in this year's state budget, the MTA will now have a dedicated revenue source for subway and bus capital projects. If implemented with fidelity and resources, buses could spend less time stuck in traffic.

One bright spot over the past year was the adoption -- championed by City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, the Community Service Society, and Riders Alliance -- of New York City's new **Fair Fares program** (half-priced metrocards for low-income New Yorkers). While implementation by the de Blasio Administration has been slower than advocates hoped, the program represents a significant expansion of transit opportunity for low-income New Yorkers.



# PROGRESS REPORT: OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**Step 11:** Establish a NYC Office of Integration to drive progress across agencies and systems.



**City Hall has not taken steps to coordinate desegregation efforts across the city.**

As noted throughout this report, meaningful steps are underway at both HPD and DOE to address and reverse entrenched patterns of segregation in housing and schools. HPD's **Where We Live NYC** is a data- and community-driven process with considerable transparency that directly tackles housing inequality and residential segregation. DOE's **Diversity in our Schools** initiative is a large-scale effort to change admissions and enrollment patterns across all grade levels.

In its 2019 **report**, the **School Diversity Advisory Group** called for a new Schools Integration Chief to oversee initiatives aimed at desegregating the city's schools. Additional recommendations address school funding, school culture, restorative justice, curriculum, and teacher and staff diversity.

The recommendations reflect a more comprehensive, systematic approach than the DOE has taken to date, with school by school and district-by-district, opt-in initiatives. It remains to be seen whether these SDAG recommendations will be adopted.

Despite progress at the agency level, however, there is not yet evidence of a sufficient commitment to these effort by Mayor de Blasio himself, or by a deputy mayor or senior leader at City Hall. As a result, agencies lack a strong mandate, leadership, support, and structure to align their efforts. Success will depend on coordinated reform to school policy, housing policy, and infrastructure investments. The impact of this work will be limited without a shared framework and mutual accountability.

In May 2018, Council Member Torres reintroduced a bill from last session that would create an Office of School Integration within the City's Commission on Human Rights, which would report annually on impediments to school integration, causes of racial segregation in the City, and policy solutions to address their findings. This bill has yet to receive a hearing.

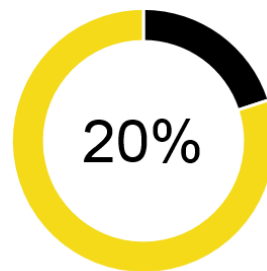


## OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As a part of this year's charter revision process, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer is proposing a charter amendment to establish a Chief Diversity Officer in the Mayor's office and in every city agency. The proposal seeks to "grow, track, and measure" the city's MWBE program, diversity among city agency staff, and "administrative policies that foster equity and inclusion within the City's budget process." If this proposal is successful, this office could be a place increase coordination between desegregation efforts.

However it is structured, high-level City Hall leadership and a structure of coordination would be necessary to transform City agency's recent first steps into a more transformative effort to integrate a segregated city.

**Step 12:** Create a shared public dashboard on segregation in NYC, to hold agencies -- and all of us -- accountable for progress.



**New data available from HPD, DOE, SDAG, HPD. But no hub for information across agencies. No coordination articulation of goals or progress.**

The planning processes identified in this report have provided useful new data and visualizations about segregation. Where We Live NYC has begun to publish **data** from their research and analysis online. The SDAG report has excellent graphs and charts that make it easy to understand the problems they are trying to tackle.

District 15's Diversity **website** is an excellent example of data sharing, with all of its presentations, videos, and handouts accessible online and in multiple languages, and with its thorough and clear presentation of data.



## OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The School Diversity Accountability Act, passed in 2015, required the DOE to report annually on school demographics, participation in gifted and talented programs, free and reduced lunch, and English Language learner enrollment, among other things. DOE's new school **dashboard** starts to make diversity data available for each school, though it does not easily represent trends and patterns across schools, and does not explicitly address segregation.

Media have also provided several strong presentations of data on segregation, such as the New York Times' Extensive Data Shows Punishing Effect of Racism on Black Boys, and this **piece by the Times' Editorial Board** which includes graphics that show how the Mayor's plan to alter the admissions process at the City's 8 specialized high schools would impact the demographics of students receiving offers.

However, there is no shared public dashboard where updates on these efforts and current data on housing, school, and infrastructure segregation and inequality can be found. Such a dashboard should make it possible to evaluate data at various geographic scales, and track progress towards explicit, time-bound goals.

This kind of analysis can help agencies align their overlapping efforts and communicate clearly and consistently with the public. Data presented legibly and made public and centralized can encourage dialogue and promote smart policymaking. Information on New York City's current segregation and our progress towards integration would help our communities understand the problem and work towards solutions.

At the end of the day, this dashboard is more than just attractive visuals. It is a commitment to outcomes, honesty, and work towards a shared vision of an integrated New York. If realized, it would render future progress reports like this one obsolete. Sadly, we expect there will be need to issue another one.